

The Baptist Record

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Age doesn't hold her back...

Eldest Southern Baptist missionary arrives on field

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — The day after Margaret Burks graduated from New Orleans Seminary this past May with a master of divinity degree — with honors, at age 81 — she was packing up to go to Panama to build a church, for the eighth time.

She has been on 24 missionary expeditions in her life — that is, her life since age 70 — but as of Sept. 30 she reached a new milestone.

Burks, who turned 82 on Aug. 28, became the oldest active missionary of the Foreign Mission Board when she left on the last day of September for a two-year appointment.

She will serve in Arusha, Tanzania, as business manager and teacher at the International Baptist Theological Seminary.

While studying the native language of Swahili, she will give instruction in English in bookkeeping, typing, the Johannine epistles, and the synoptic gospels.

A retired certified public accountant and head auditor for the Internal Revenue Service at the Atlanta office, Burks has been an "unofficial" foreign missionary since December 1985 when she made her first mission trip, a building project at a Woman's Missionary Union camp in Liberia.

She returned nine more times in the course of seven years, becoming an expert at mortar mixing, brick building and cement smoothing.

She helped construct eight church facilities and laid concrete for several basketball courts.

Besides Panama and Liberia, Burks also has been on working

mission trips to Peru (twice) and once each to Ecuador, China, and Singapore.

This past summer she went on her first archeological expedition in Israel with the annual NOBTS trip led by professor Dennis Cole, during which she and others helped excavate, among other things, the 4,000-year-old remains of a child buried in its home for protection against roaming animals.

"There's always something to learn, something to do," she said. "Why sit at home when I'm healthy?"

Brought up in a wealthy home in Georgia, she cared for her parents for many years and eventually graduated with a 4.0 average from what is now Georgia State University.

She promised her very proper mother three things:

"I'll never use anything but sterling silver eating utensils. I'll never eat off of a paper plate. And I'll never marry someone like my boss."

Burks has since broken all three rules — "and then some," she said, even eating with her fingers the traditional African meals — and she "didn't suffer a bit."

At age 42, Burks not only married someone like her supervisor, widower Jesse Burks, she actually married him, immediately becoming both a mother and grandmother.

"It was the strangest thing; he just looked different to me all of a sudden one day. I knew it was the right thing to do," she said, a simple statement that has since helped

didn't sit around long wondering, "Now what?"

At age 70 she began planning for her first flight in an airplane, a family vacation to London.

Later that same year she had another country stamped into her passport as she made her first mission trip to Liberia.

Then in 1990 she heard and answered positively when God called her to do something more: to prepare, intensely, for ministry.

"I'll never forget it," she said. "I was sitting in the Sunday evening service," at First Church of Flowery Branch, Ga., the town to which she and Jesse moved in retirement.

"The Lord laid it on my heart that he wanted me to go to seminary. The impression was so strong that I walked down the aisle at the end of the service and asked my pastor if he would recommend me to go," — part of the application requirements for enrolling in an SBC seminary.

That fall she became a student at age 75 in the master of divinity degree program at the NOBTS North Georgia extension center campus, then located in Marietta at Roswell Street Church.

Burks saw the transition as the campus moved to a permanent location in Decatur when members of Columbia Drive Church gave their property and facilities to New Orleans Seminary in 1994.

"My seminary days were exciting days. I just loved it," she said. "The Bible came alive to me. I would have gone to seminary just to experience that. I especially enjoyed learning so much about the Old Testament."

"But I got tired of hearing people ask, 'Why are you in seminary? Why shouldn't I be in seminary? I wanted to know how to do what God wanted me to do and I wanted to do it right.'"

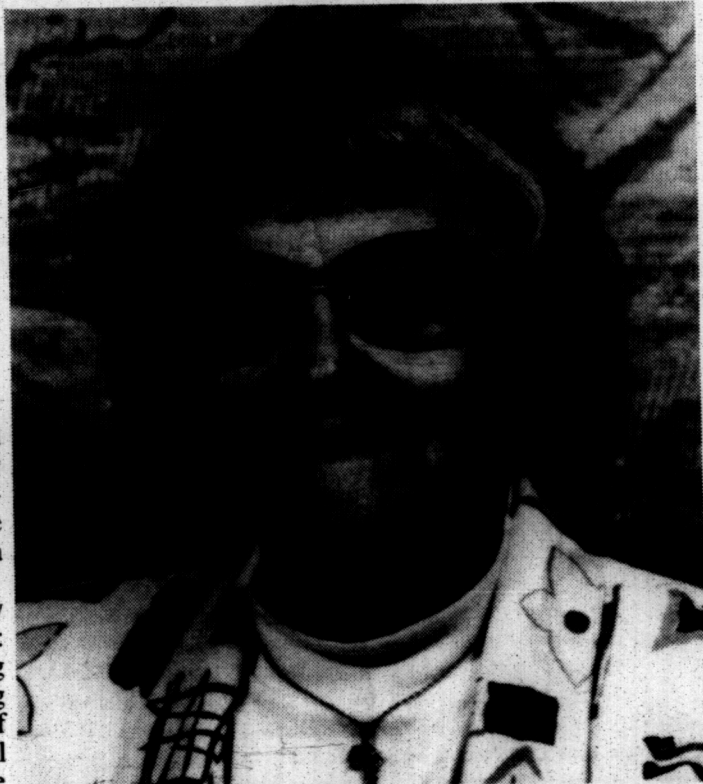
Halfway into her seminary training and by then a veteran of global missions, Burks decided to move to the NOBTS main campus in 1994 to accelerate the completion date of her degree program.

She moved into the women's dormitory, Carey Hall, and became "one of the girls," said several of her classmates of a woman who was by then a great-grandmother.

"Margaret Burks seems capable of doing whatever needs to be done," said William Neal, editor of the "Christian Index," the Georgia Baptist newspaper, in an editorial salute to Burks in May upon the completion of her master's degree.

There'll be no turning back now for Burks. After 29 hours of travel to her new home in Tanzania, she said she intends to stay "as long as my health holds up."

"If you know God wants you to do something, just do it," she said. "Just do it."



The African mission field has never been too far away from Margaret Burks' heart, as evidenced by the necklace in the shape of Africa that she wore for her New Orleans Seminary graduation photograph in May of this year. Burks, 82, became the oldest Southern Baptist missionary when she arrived in Tanzania in September. (Photo courtesy of New Orleans Seminary)

her make up her mind about a myriad of other situations with which she has been confronted over the years.

So when Jesse died in 1985 after 28 happy years of marriage, Burks

Nearly half a century of communism stifled the creativity and work of Christian communicators in Eastern Europe, but the Baptist World Alliance in their current newsletter reports that the tumbling of the Iron Curtain has resulted in a flood of new publications and broadcast services in that area of the world. The inaugural meeting of European Communicators Sept. 19-22 in Tallinn, Estonia, saw virtually every type of Christian magazine, newspaper, and video on display. The meeting was designed to give Eastern European Christian communicators their first glimpse at the world of Christian materials available in the West. Established Christian communicators from the West shared skills in print and electronic media with their counterparts from Eastern Europe, where even 50-year-old manual typewriters had to be registered with the former communist governments bent on tightly controlling the flow of information. "For many years, I worked for the government and my head was occupied. Now it is my heart," said Russian Baptist editor Yuri Apatov.

A Meridian television station is among the broadcasters leading the charge against the new CBS network show, "Public Morals," which the American Family Association (AFA) has pegged as setting "new lows in taste and content." AFA reported that WMDN-TV, the CBS affiliate in Meridian, is balking at broadcasting "Public Morals" due to extreme language and questionable subject matter. "We perceive ourselves to be guests in people's living rooms and to exhibit language we would not use in even the most extreme circumstances is just not acceptable," WMDN vice president/general manager Marc Grossman told the "AFA Journal" newsletter. "Public Morals is the brainchild of Steven Bochco, who is responsible for bringing the controversial 'NYPD Blue' to network television. AFA is planning a campaign to notify corporations of the new show's content so advertisers can't plead ignorance. 'If an advertisement shows up on 'Public Morals,' there's a very good chance the company knew what type of show it was supporting...." said an AFA vice-president Tim Wildmon.

10 years ago

Cooperative Program (CP) gifts from Mississippi Baptist churches for September 1986 total \$1,479,091 — a whopping 31% increase over the same month in the previous year and a new record for state CP gifts.

20 years ago

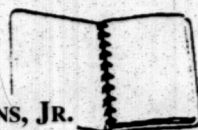
A new state law to protect confidentiality between clergy and church members who seek counseling goes into effect after a high-profile campaign by the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission and other religious groups.

50 years ago

Churches in south Mississippi record "far below normal" drops in summer Sunday School attendance because of a polio scare in the area, prompting county associations to plan a special campaign to boost Sunday School attendance.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

WILLIAM H. PERKINS, JR.



Standing on the Word

In our computer-driven, high-tech world of today, many people have turned to science and technology for answers that only God can provide. We believe that our own intellect (ego, actually) can determine from whence we came, where we are now, and what we will encounter in our future.

Granted, science and technology have allowed mankind to reach unimaginable goals and compelled us to dream of a limitless future. We should not harbor a Luddite fear of progress.

People being people, however, we have a tendency to exploit our God-created intelligence to twist heretofore immutable concepts of the natural and spiritual worlds into theories with which we are more comfortable.

Thus, the Jesus Seminar exists to redefine the life of Christ, utilizing political correctness and groundless preconceptions to bring the deity of Jesus into question for a generation of people already

caught up in a desperate search for spiritual meaning in their lives.

"U.S. News and World Report," in an April 8, 1996 article entitled, "In Search of Jesus," makes the observation that no issue has stirred as much activity, excitement, or acrimony among biblical scholars over the past decade as the "quest for the historical Jesus."

Into that debate steps Robert Funk, creator of the Jesus Seminar and a Vanderbilt University graduate who has taught at Texas Christian University, Harvard, and Emory.

The Jesus Seminar consists of about 50 religion professors who meet periodically to offer ideas on the life of Christ and then vote with colored beads on whether specific Bible accounts are factual.

Funk told "U.S. News and World Report" in the above-mentioned article that he wanted the seminar to "set Jesus free" from "scriptural and creedal positions in which we have entombed him. We

aspire to no less than to roll away the stone from the door of the rock-cut tomb."

The bead-voting members of this august society have therefore concluded that only 20% of what the Bible lists as Jesus' sayings were actually said by Jesus.

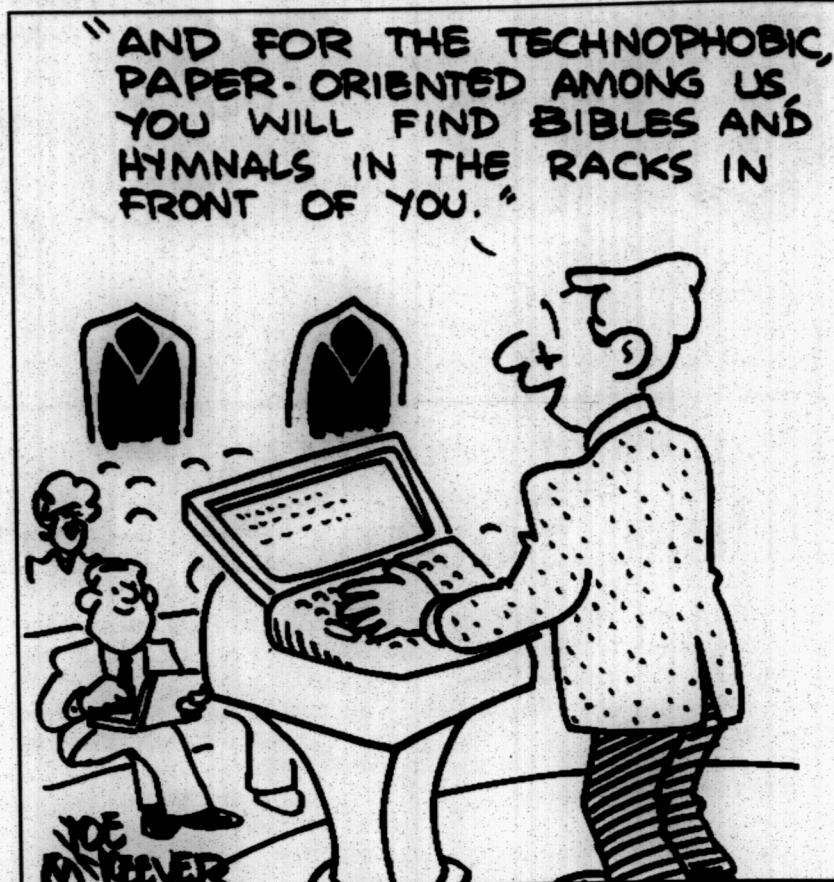
Among the fakes tagged by the Jesus Seminar:

- the Lord's Prayer.
- Jesus' claims to divinity.
- the virgin birth.
- many of his miracles.
- his bodily resurrection.

All of this has led Funk to write a book, "Honest to Jesus," in which he describes Christ as a secular sage and social critic who used humor or irony to make a point, perhaps "the first stand-up Jewish comic."

Starting a new religion, Funk believes, "would have been the farthest thing from his mind."

Speaking for myself and, I am absolutely certain, for the vast majority of Mississippi Baptists, I



want Mr. Funk and the other members of the Jesus Seminar and the whole world to know that Jesus is who he said he is, word-for-word as faithfully recorded in the Bible.

I don't require beads, a scientific experiment, or a computer modeling program, to prove to me that Jesus is the Christ.

I have the Word of God. What else does one need?

October is CP Month...

Church's Cooperative Program giving needs discussion

By David Michel

From the vantage point of the Mississippi Cooperative Program Promotion Director's chair, listen to some typical questions I receive as we observe Cooperative Program Month during October:

What's the average percentage a church gives through the Cooperative Program?

What does the denomination expect churches to give?

How does a church balance mission gifts against local ministry needs?

Of course, I have standard answers for each of these questions.

In 1995, Mississippi churches gave 10.6% of their undesignated offerings through the Cooperative Program (CP).

The denomination expects churches to give 50% of their offerings through CP.

This unexpected answer usually elicits the third question listed above, along with other comments that probably shouldn't be printed.

How does a church balance mission support against local ministry needs? Such a question deserves careful discussion.

Every congregation should conduct such a discussion each year during budget planning.

Rather than facing the spiritual struggle required to honestly answer the question, most churches simply settle for matching the average.

For that reason, I feel justified in raising the expectation to an outrageous level. Jesus used a similar technique in his conversation with the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-30).

Jesus asked this young exec-

utive to give to the poor all that he had and to follow him so he could gain eternal life. Both the young man and the disciples were overwhelmed by the size of the request.

The ruler walked away, but the disciples entered a serious discussion with our Lord about the cost of belonging to God's kingdom.

The current state of CP stands in need of serious discussion. October has traditionally been the month on the denominational calendar designated for CP promotion.

May I list some points for discussion, which could shape the future of our cooperative ministry together as we move ever closer to a new millenium?

— What will be required of a 21st Century version of Bold Mission Thrust?

— Can we break the downward trend in percentage giving through CP, as evidenced over the last ten years (see chart at right)?

— Can we break through the feeling that CP giving is a denominational expectation, and build a new network of mutuality and efficiency in mission endeavors?

— What denominational restructuring will be necessary for kindling deeper excitement among our churches for cooperative mission efforts?

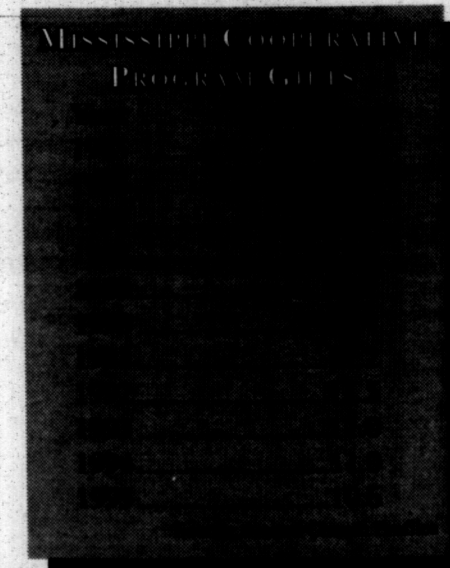
— What sacrifices will be required for churches and denominational entities to move toward a position more aligned with the radical expectations of Jesus?

I would not presume to have definitive answers to any of these questions, but I would also not presume that Jesus doesn't expect us to be looking for appropriate answers.

I would presume that securing those answers will involve us in the most strenuous of spiritual examinations.

We should not enter looking for averages from which to justify ourselves, but rather we should enter with a longing for a new encounter with the life-changing Christ.

To begin such a journey could lead us to the best Cooperative Program Month we have ever experienced and perhaps the best century — no, millenium — we have ever experienced, as well.



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Witnessing in Christ is theme of '96 Lay Missions Conference

By Tim Nicholas

The annual Mississippi Baptist Lay Missions Conference will be conducted on the afternoon and evening of Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson. Theme is "In Christ...Be A Witness with Diverse People."

Inviting Mississippi Baptist laity to attend, Paul Harrell, Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood director, referred to "Experiencing God," a Baptist study for people wanting to develop a personal relationship with God.

"In the 'Experiencing God' study, when we see what God is doing, the invitation is to get involved. At this conference, Mississippi Baptists can see what God is doing and have opportunities to participate," said Harrell.

The afternoon session begins at 3 p.m. with two types of programs.

The mission fellowships and other groups hold their annual meetings and there will be a general conference for those not involved with the mission fellowships.

The group meetings include agricultural missions, construction, partnership missions, Campers on Mission (COM), educational missions, Church Renewal, and Mission Service Corps/Volunteers (MSC/VIM) in Mission. Each sets its own agenda.



Glaze

The agricultural missions group will feature a report from Kurt Lawrence, missionary to Thailand.

Campers on Mission will hear reports on the trucker's and seaman's ministries and a report on the national COM rally held this summer in Mississippi.

The Church Renewal group will hear reports on jail and prison ministries, staff families retreats, and support groups.

The construction group will hear of construction opportunities in Colorado and a report on the World



O'Brien

Changers projects in Mississippi.

The education group will hear reports on Book-Link and on an ongoing educational project in China.

The MSC/VIM group will hear reports of mission opportunities in Honduras.

The general conference session, held simultaneously with the mission fellowship meetings, features Jack Glaze, retired professor at New Orleans Seminary and former missionary to Argentina.

Glaze will lead a discussion on the theme of the conference in relation to the diversity of people groups in Mississippi — from language groups to ethnic groups to economically diverse groups.

The evening portion of the conference begins at 5 p.m. with the annual banquet (serving line opens at 4:30 p.m.).

Featured speaker will be Dellanna O'Brien, executive director-treasurer of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Special music will be led by Tommy Sparkman and the Gents, a singing group from Parkway Church, Clinton.

Robert Brown, pastor of Grace

Community Baptist Church in Tchula, will give a testimony on "Start Something New."

Also, representatives from the three Mississippi Baptist Partnership Missions groups will be presented.

These include Mr. and Mrs. Veryl Henderson. He is state missions director for the Colorado Baptist General Convention. From Venezuela will be Patsy Davis, WMU leader and missionary to Venezuela.

From Honduras will be Roberto Rodriguez, executive director of the Honduras Baptist Convention; Samuel Rodriguez, president of the Honduras Convention; and Carl Rees, missionary administrator of the Honduras Baptist Mission.

The conference is free. Tickets for the annual banquet are \$8 per person and require reservations.

Child care for birth through five years will be provided for those who pre-register for child care.

For more information, contact the Brotherhood Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Published Since 1877

Thursday, October 10, 1996

Williams affirms commitment to see Brotherhood transition to end

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — In a move to put any rumors to rest, Brotherhood Commission President James D. Williams said Sept. 19 he will remain in his present position until the agency closes on June 19, 1997.

"That is my commitment and I expect to stay in the trenches with you and be a cooperative member of this team, to being as helpful to Southern Baptists as I possibly can be and being as helpful to this staff

as I possibly can be," Williams said, speaking to a gathering of employees.

The meeting was called to inform the employees of actions taken earlier in the week at the Executive Committee meetings and at a "visioning retreat" focusing on Brotherhood's merger



Williams

into the SBC's new North American Mission Board.

The functions of the Brotherhood Commission, Radio and Television Commission, and the Home Mission Board will be merged into the North American Mission Board as part of the SBC's "Covenant for a New Century" reorganization plan.

Williams noted Jack Childs, the agency's vice president for support services and a 35-year veteran, has said he wants to be "the one to turn the key when the doors close," and Williams said he would be "standing there with him, shoulder to shoulder as a brother in Christ."

"I will also be seeking to fulfill my accountability to the trustees of the Brotherhood Commission, to see that we have a very good closure to our ministry here," he said.

Williams said he would "make himself available" for service with the NAMB, but understands the leadership team of the new agency would be "determined by the CEO and I would serve at his good pleasure and (in response to) the calling of God in my life."

In the meantime, Williams said there will be some "tough decisions" ahead in the months leading up to closure in June.

"There will be some decisions that you won't like, and that I won't like, and there will be moments that we will be tempted to be discouraged and despondent. But let us remember that our God is a God of grace and a God of glory, and we want more than anything else to honor him and to be obedient to the Lord's command to share Jesus Christ with everybody, everywhere."

Ministers' Wives to meet Oct. 28 at First, Jackson

The annual Conference of Mississippi Baptist Ministers' Wives will take place from 1-4:30 p.m. on Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson.

Speakers will be Katherine Webster and Betty Davis.

Webster is the wife of James Webster, retired director of church services for Metro Association. She retired recently from the staff of the executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Davis is the wife of Charles Davis, pastor of Newhebron Church, Newhebron.

Webster will speak on enhancing one's personal relationship with God.

Davis' topic is "Preparing for the Holidays," dealing with Christmas decorating and preparation for the holidays.



Webster

Participants will hear both speakers during the split schedule format.

The Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union will sponsor a fellowship break midway through the program. The break will include a get-acquainted time with Dellanna O'Brien, executive director-treasurer of Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Child care for preschoolers will be available on a limited basis. Registration for child care is necessary by Oct. 21.

For more information, contact Julius Thompson, director of the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Davis

1996 Pastor's Conference spotlights Miss. pastors



Boone



Atwood



D. Stewart



Blackard

By Tim Nicholas

The 1996 Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference begins at 1 p.m. on Oct. 28, at First Church, Jackson. The conference theme is "Breaking the Fallow Ground."

The 1 p.m. session will feature Mississippi pastors, according to Clark Stewart, conference president and pastor of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs.

Mississippi pastors scheduled for the afternoon session include:

— Don Boone, pastor of Agricola Church, Agricola,
— Tom Atwood, pastor of First Church, Oxford,
— Dean Stewart, pastor of First Church, McLain, and
— Kara Blackard, pastor of Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth, who is currently serving as the conference's vice president/president-elect.

Ronnie Cottingham, music evangelist from Agricola, will be afternoon praise and worship leader.

Special music will be brought during the first session by Steve Warren, minister of music at Central Church, Corbin; Steve Abercrombie, youth minister and associate pastor at Harmony Church, Crystal Springs; and Beth Ann Johnson of Crystal Springs.

The evening session begins at 6:16 p.m. with a concert by recording artists Gold City.

Messages at the evening session will be brought by

— Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala.
— O. S. Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Dallas, Tex., and
— James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga.

Special music for the evening session will feature B. J. Jenkins, music evangelist from Brandon; Danny Lanier, music evangelist from Little Rock, Miss.; and the sanctuary choir of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs.



C. Stewart



Wolfe



Hawkins



Merritt

Mississippi churches caught in embezzlement trap

What you can do to protect your church

By Carl M. White

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHURCH FROM EMBEZZLEMENT

- 1 Operate under an approved general budget.
- 2 Always have at least two unrelated, trustworthy individuals in custody of the offerings until they have been safely deposited.
- 3 Separate various financial responsibilities among different people, such as: counting and depositing offerings, writing checks, signing checks.
- 4 Establish clear guidelines for handling restricted or designated funds.
- 5 Have some sort of general ledger system for recording all transactions. Reconcile monthly with supporting records such as receipts.
- 6 Establish a clear policy for making purchases. A purchase order system is recommended.
- 7 Prepare and present to the church and church leadership monthly financial reports.
- 8 Have your church treasurer and others who handle church funds bonded.
- 9 Communicate financial policies clearly to members and donors.
- 10 Have an annual audit, either by an internal audit committee or an outside auditing firm.

"Embezzlement has hit every area of our state," according to Barry A. Shirley, Director of the Accounting and Personnel Service Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Shirley has assisted six different churches over the past four months with problems related to the misappropriation of funds.

There have been other cases in the state involving hundreds of thousands of dollars, and involving smaller amounts, according to Shirley.

"Nothing will tear apart a church quicker than the misappropriation of funds. It is a violation of a trust level, which is not easily overcome," Shirley said.

The fallout can ruin lives and

careers, including pastors'.

"It usually involves one person who has been given too much responsibility without adequate checks and balances," said Shirley.

Embezzlement is more likely to happen in the smaller church, for smaller sums of money.

It is less likely to happen in larger churches, where there is usually more than one individual involved in the handling of funds.

However, when it does happen in the larger churches it often involves larger sums of money, Shirley added.

Church financial malfeasance has been in the national news recently.

In July, Ellen Cooke, former national treasurer of the Episcopal

Church in the United States, was convicted of embezzling more than \$2 million and began serving a five-year federal prison term.

A federal judge handed Cooke a stiffer sentence than recommended in guidelines, citing Cooke's "flagrant" abuse of trust. Cooke is appealing the sentence.

People do not expect such a thing to happen on the local level, according to Shirley.

Unfortunately, it does.

Shirley suggests several actions a church can take to prevent problems (see box at right).

How a church handles its money is an important aspect of stewardship.

People are more willing to give if they are assured that their money is used responsibly.

Convocations at Baptist seminaries worked smoothly over 15,000 miles

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Although flying on tight schedules for approximately 15,000 miles on more than 20 different commercial flights in a 14-day period, the team leading the recent convocations for spiritual awakening on Southern Baptist seminary campuses had only one minor delay — and that was on a weekend.

It occurred at a convenient time — a Friday. At the beginning of the weekend in between the two weeks of travel, a flight out of Memphis was one hour late as each team member headed home for the weekend, causing a few to miss their connecting flights to their respective hometowns.

"The Lord really watched over us these entire two weeks, protecting us and giving us the strength we needed," said Mike Hand, assistant to Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., and president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"It was amazing how everything worked out so well while we were flying on such tight schedules, meeting connecting flights," Hand said.

"There were no bad weather problems, no mechanical difficulties, none of us ever lost a piece of luggage and we never arrived at a seminary late," he said.

"The one problem, and that was nothing much to speak of, couldn't have happened at a better time," Hand said.

"It's just simply amazing to think that we made that many trips with six people in two weeks, and we had only that one problem. You know the Lord had to have been in charge of this," he pointed out.

The response at each seminary was similarly significant, Hand said.

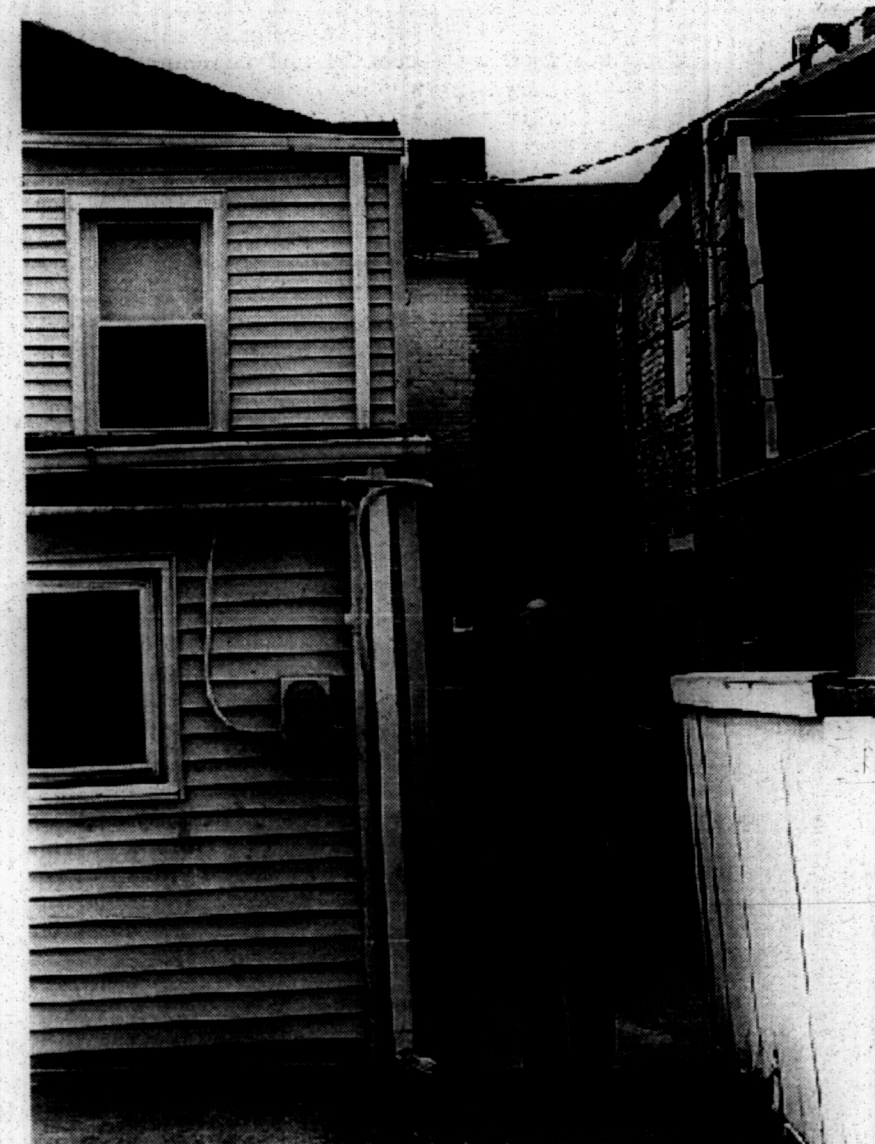
Everything went smoothly and the initial impact of the convocations seems to have been profound.

"Those who attended won't soon forget what they have gone

through," Hand said.

"And a most amazing thing that occurred on every campus was the utter silence, an absolute holy hush that filled the room" as those in attendance listened to the keynote

speakers, Hand said. Throughout the audiences, which on just about every campus numbered more than 1,000, "you could have heard a pin drop," Hand said. "People were listening intently."



October is CP Month

Home Missionary Jon Spencer is one of nearly 5,000 home missionaries supported by the Cooperative Program. He works not only as a pastor for Canton Church, but also as a director at the Neighborhood Center in Baltimore, Md. Gifts from the Cooperative Program provide 35 percent of the Home Mission Board annual budget. For more information, see "Guest opinion" on page 2. (HMB photo)

'97 SBC housing forms released to messengers

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The housing form for the 1997 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas June 17-19 is now available, according to Jack Wilkerson, convention manager and vice president for business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee.

The form, to be used by messengers to request room reservations at hotels in Dallas, is available at all the state Baptist convention offices, at the SBC Executive Committee office in Nashville, and is included in the September issue of "SBC Life," the monthly publication of the Executive Committee sent to pastors and others, Wilkerson said.

Reservations will be made on a "first-come, first-served" basis until all hotel rooms in the housing block are taken.

All requests are being handled

by the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau through their computerized housing system.

Forms must be postmarked on or after Oct. 1, 1996, Wilkerson said. No reservations will be processed prior to that date.

Reservations may be made by calling the Dallas Housing Bureau at (800) 792-1029, (214) 712-1980, or faxing the housing form to (214) 712-1981 beginning Oct. 1.

A total of 11 hotels are in the downtown housing block, and 15 more are located in the Market Center area.

The 1997 annual meeting will be held at the Dallas Convention Center, also the location of the Pastors' Conference.

The Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting will be held in the convention center's Arena.

The SBC Convention Hotel is the Hyatt Regency.

Early submission requested for state convention resolutions

Early submission is strongly recommended for all resolutions to be proposed at the 1996 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting on Oct. 29-30 at First Church, Jackson. Proposed resolutions may be mailed to the Office of the Executive Director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. All proposed resolutions mailed to the above address will be given to the Resolutions Committee. Early submission will also allow proposed resolutions to be printed in the daily bulletins during the convention. For more information, contact the MBCB executive director's office at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

SBC Cooperative Program giving sets new record

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention ended the 1995-96 fiscal year with a record \$148,185,076 in Cooperative Program gifts, surpassing by nearly \$2.5 million the record given last year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For the SBC's fiscal year, Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, the \$148.2 million total for 1995-96 is 1.68%, or \$2,445,587, above last year's record of \$145,739,489.

Compared to the 1995-96 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget of \$141,629,127, the gifts for the past year exceeded the budget by \$6,555,949 or 4.63%.

Designated gifts also set a record. For 1995-96, designated gifts totaled \$138,446,505 compared to the previous year's record total of \$132,830,194, an increase of \$5,616,310 or 4.23%.

Adding the record Cooperative Program plus designated gifts for the 1995-96 year, Southern Baptists

gave nearly \$300 million last year through regular channels for the mission and education enterprise of the Southern Baptist Convention.

September were \$2,244,622 or \$255,473 less than September 1995 of \$2,500,095.

The September CP totals also

ing to a SBC-approved method.

One-half of the \$6.55 million will be distributed according to the present Cooperative Program

age will be approximately \$640,000, its regular 19.56% share.

Another \$3.27 million will be distributed according to the SBC Capital Needs Budget, which is scheduled over a 10-year period, 1990-91 through 1999-2000, with capital needs funds distributed annually on a percentage basis. Included in the capital needs budget are the six SBC seminaries, the HMB, and the Radio and Television Commission.

The fiscal year-end news means the FMB will have received more than \$72 million through the Cooperative Program for the year plus \$95 million in designated gifts.

The HMB will have received more than \$28 million in CP gifts and \$41 million in designated gifts for the fiscal year.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Mississippi CP exceeding '96 budget

Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) gifts thus far in 1996 total \$18,155,505. This amount is \$694,767 (3.98%) above the pro rata budget of \$17,460,738, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Total gifts remain above budget even though the Mississippi CP budget requires an average of nearly \$2 million per month, and September gifts totaled only \$1,594,276.

June gifts also totaled just under \$1.6 million, but the shortfall months have been offset by such months

as January when gifts of nearly \$2.6 million were recorded.

The pro rata budget is figured by taking the total 1996 budget of \$23,280,984, dividing by 12, and multiplying by the number of months elapsed.

Cooperative Program gifts go to Southern Baptist Convention-related causes, and such Mississippi causes as the Oct. 18-19 Church Media Library Conference in McComb, the Women on Mission Overnight at Oxford on Oct. 18-19, and the youth ministers workshop at Louisville on Oct. 21-23.

For the month of September, Cooperative Program gifts totaled \$12,249,874 compared to September 1995 of \$12,879,687, or a decrease of \$629,812 or 4.89%. Designated gifts for the month of

surpassed the budget requirement for the month, \$11,802,427, by \$447,447 or 3.80%.

Since the budget was surpassed for the year, the allocation of the overage will be distributed accord-

Allocation Budget formula. As examples, it means the FMB will receive 50% of \$3.27 million, or approximately \$1.64 million in additional CP funds over the budget; the HMB's portion of the over-

B'nai B'rith targets Southern Baptists over Jewish evangelism

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — B'nai B'rith has launched a campaign against the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) 1996 resolution on Jewish evangelism and is using the campaign to raise funds.

B'nai B'rith describes itself as "the world's oldest and largest Jewish organization," founded 153 years ago, now with programs in "community service, public affairs and disaster relief," its headquarters in Washington and members in 56 countries.

In a national mailing, B'nai B'rith urges:

1) an attached, form letter-type

postcard be sent to SBC offices in Nashville, Tenn., which declares, "The outrageous Southern Baptist Convention resolution advocating an active program of converting Jews to Christianity is both condescending and contemptuous. This profoundly disrespectful action demonstrates a basic lack of respect for Judaism as a sister religion. For men and women of the worldwide Jewish community, Jewish identity is a meaningful and joyous part of who we are. Our Jewish values sustain us today as they have through centuries of persecution. And we are proud of our Jewishness."

That is why this organizational decision by the Southern Baptist Convention is so deeply offensive. I strongly urge its immediate repeal."

2) contributions be sent to B'nai B'rith, stating, "We cannot remain silent as Jewish children are singled out for Christian evangelism."

Enclosed is my contribution to support B'nai B'rith's national campaign to expose and overturn the SBC resolution:

The letter detailing the B'nai B'rith campaign, from the organization's international president, Tommy Baer, is on stationery topped with "AIR EXPRESS" and underscored by the word, "URGENT," nine times.

The appeal was mailed to about 100,000 people, said Robin Schwartz-Kreger, B'nai B'rith's director of media relations. She said the organization does not disclose receipts from direct mail pieces.

Several thousand postcards have been received by the SBC Executive Committee and are being answered by Morris H. Chapman, the committee's president and chief executive officer.

Phil Roberts, director of the Home Mission Board Interfaith Witness Department, said Baer's letter evidences the resolution "has been largely misunderstood and misrepresented by the press and by much of the Jewish community."

"That people would be shocked that we as Baptists would still be proclaiming that Jesus Christ is the way and means for salvation is commentary on our society and culture, in which everyone believes every other religion is equal to the next one," Roberts said.

"Faith in Christ doesn't negate a Jewish believer's heritage, Roberts also maintained.

"In fact ... the Christian movement at its beginning was so much an extension and part of the Jewish faith and the fulfillment of its Hebrew scriptures' prophecy that the big issue facing the church was, 'Can you be a gentile and be a

Christian?'" he said.

Roberts said he also hopes the resolution will yield "open, meaningful discussion, that we can sensibly and reasonably sit down and say, 'Yes, we

do believe this, we still respect you, we love you, we will support you' — and there are no greater supporters of the Jewish community or Israel than evangelical Christians..."

Employee skills inventory conducted for NAMB slots

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Employees of the Home Mission Board (HMB), Radio and Television Commission (RTVC), and Brotherhood Commission have been asked to complete a skills inventory to "help assure all employees get the maximum consideration for North American Mission Board (NAMB) positions."

According to a twice-monthly bulletin produced by the NAMB transition communications team, the inventory form was scheduled to be completed by employees Sept. 25.

The inventory information will be compiled electronically for an Implementation Task Force personnel subcommittee and will be accessible by categories such as skills and education, according to David Hankins, chairman of the NAMB transition communications team and vice president for convention policy for the Executive Committee.

To assist displaced employees from the HMB, RTVC and Brotherhood in finding employment, Hankins said he will contact SBC agencies and state conventions

to learn of available positions.

Efforts will be made to set up a process where displaced employees can be considered for these positions.

Hankins said it has not been finally decided how many employees of the three agencies will be affected.

The three agencies combined have approximately 500 employees.

The transition group also announced NAMB information will be available on the Internet even before the agency is officially operational.

Its home page address on the World Wide Web will be NAMB.Net.

The "Net" designation usually is given to Internet providers, so NAMB will be able to set up an Internet connection service for other agencies for \$100.

The Sept. 19 NAMB transition news bulletin said the Implementation Task Force will send a letter soon to all current retirees of the HMB, RTVC, and Brotherhood assuring them their retirement benefits will continue unchanged with the transition to NAMB.

Educational Missions F'ship holds conference Oct. 28

The Educational Missions Fellowship will hold its annual conference in connection with the 1996 Lay Missions Conference on Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson.

The program will feature Celeste Corey who served as an educational consultant in Southern Asia and the Pacific area for the International Service Corps.

Corey is a native of Grenada and a member of Friendship Church, Grenada. She holds a BS degree in special education from Mississippi State University and a master's in education from the University of Florida. She was formerly appointed to her current appointment with the Florida Mission Board.

Additionally, a report will be presented by Bill Roberts of Texas on how to reach the nations that profess to be Christian primarily through missionaries, all kinds of Christian material to under-developed countries.

Allgood of Guilford will report on the work she is doing with Guangxi Foreign Language Institute at Guangxi University in Nanning, China.

Allgood recruits teachers at the request of the university and, with the knowledge of the Foreign Mission Board.

Interested lay gifts...

Church Renewal F'ship set for First, Jackson

This year's Church Renewal Fellowship Lay Missions Conference on Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson, will concentrate upon ministries within and outside the church.

Ken Rhodes, director of missions for Pearl River Association, will share about staff/families retreats and staff support groups.

He will share about the retreat held in his association in February 1996. He will inform the group about the committee that is now working on the "How To" on retreats and support groups for staff as a follow-up.

Charles Jones, chaplain at Parchman, will share about the jail and prison ministry.

This will give opportunity for more lay people to be informed of what is happening at Parchman and how to become involved if there is an interest in this ministry.

Non-commercial Christian stations to raise power in southwest Miss.

A pair of listener-supported, non-commercial Christian radio stations will soon fill more of the airwaves in southwest Mississippi with southern gospel, inspirational, light contemporary, and bluegrass gospel music.

Grace and Truth Radio — KPAE FM 91.5 and WZFL FM 104.9 — received approval from the Federal Communications Commission in December 1995 to

increase broadcast power to 70,000 watts at its Centreville tower, meaning that station will soon be heard from south of Baton Rouge in Louisiana to north of Port Gibson in Mississippi.

The radio stations, which began broadcasting with 360 watts of power in September of 1985, are also affiliated with the Moody Broadcasting Network and USA Radio News.

The stations feature popular Christian radio personalities such as James Dobson, Charles Stanley, Charles Swindoll, Tony Evans, John McArthur, D. James Kennedy, and Larry Burkett.

The stations are also affiliated with the Children's Sunshine Network, a radio subscriber service providing Christian children's programming 18 hours each day.

A number of churches and individuals in Mississippi and Louisiana support the stations with prayer, volunteer labor, donated materials, and contributions, enabling the stations to remain commercial-free, according to supporter Lucille Marsalis of Centreville.

For more information, contact the stations at P.O. Box 1390, Centreville, MS 39631. Telephone: (601) 645-9133 or toll-free (800) 324-1108.



Correction

Southern Baptist missionaries Wayne and Florence Frederick of Mississippi were incorrectly identified in the Oct. 3 issue, based on information supplied to "The Baptist Record." The Fredericks are the couple standing second from left.

Samford not perturbed by magazine's labeling

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Samford University, in the opinion of the "Princeton Review," is the No. 7 "stone-cold sober school" in the nation.

"Princeton Review," which garners publicity via its yearly list of the top "party" schools in the nation, also published a list of opposites this year.

"We party — in an acceptable way," Mary Wimberly, a spokeswoman for the Baptist-related college, told "The Birmingham (Ala.) News." "It's a nice honor. ... I'm sure the parents will be pleased."

"Money" magazine rated Samford as the 26th best college buy in the nation in August, while U.S. News & World Report rated it the 12th best value among southern schools in September.

Of the "Princeton Review" ranking, Wimberly said, "We're proud of this, too."

Hunter Brewer, president of Samford's Student Government Association, returned the favor, sort of, describing the "Princeton Review" as "very narrow minded."

"If they would spend even two

days here, they'd come to the realization that we have a lot of fun," Brewer told the "Birmingham Post-Herald."

The university, which lifted a ban on dancing in the late 1980s, maintains its ban on alcohol, even at fraternity and sorority parties. "You don't hear a lot of complaints from the students about it," Brewer said. "They seem to respect the rule."

Richard Traylor, associate dean of student affairs, said of the Princeton Review, "It's always nice to be perceived the way you project yourself. We project ourselves to be a Christian institution that continues to live up to its ideals."

The New Jersey-based "Princeton Review," which is not affiliated with Princeton University, included its rankings in its annual "Advantage Guide to the Best 310 Colleges."

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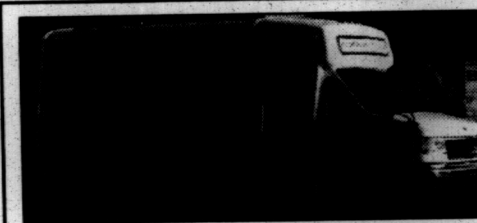


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Drug and alcohol ministry

Mark McDonald (left), assistant police chief in Hickory and pastor of Hopewell Church in Scott County, and Dale Round (right), pastor of McDonald Church in Leake County, have teamed up to teach drug and alcohol education programs in schools, Bible camps, community clubs, and youth gatherings. They are also available for revivals. As part of their presentation, McDonald's K-9 drug dog Lulu demonstrates her expertise in drug searches and Round shares his testimony about how his life changed after a drunk driver was responsible for the loss of his leg. For more information call (601) 646-2211 during the day and (601) 635-2535 at night.



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Former Mississippian using sports for partnership

Columbus native Courtney Cash of the International Sports Federation (ISF) in Dallas recently traveled to Valencia, Venezuela, at the request of the Mississippi/Venezuela Partnership to teach a Sports Evangelism at a national conference of Baptist youth and youth leaders.

Cash was able to speak with youth leaders from eight of the nine associations in Venezuela.

There are 15 different churches in the country actively involved in sports ministry, but they have been unable to work together to share ideas and grow the ministry effort.

Cash was able to guide the youth leaders through the process of planning, developing, and running a national sports ministry.

The second annual National Baptist Youth in Sports Conference was held Aug. 5-9.

The youth represented their associations in tournaments of basketball, baseball, softball, soccer,

volleyball, and indoor soccer.

Hipolito Avilah, the president of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention, praised the efforts of the Mississippi missions partnership with Venezuela.

He visited the youth sports conference and called the games, "a success for all of the youth in Venezuela."

ISF, a volunteer recruiter for the Foreign Mission Board (FMB), answered the request of the Mississippi Partnership Missions Office and sent Cash to Venezuela.

ISF has sent Sports Ministry teams and representatives into 13 countries since 1993.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reports over 5,000 people have come to know Christ through these evangelism efforts.

Cash was able to develop relationships with the youth by participating in the sporting competitions,

leading them in Bible studies, and speaking at the closing ceremonies of the conference.

While sharing practice tips with some basketball players Cash was also able to share Christ with three young men who wondered why Christian athletes would want to come to Venezuela to compete with them.

Sports Evangelism has already led to many conversions in Venezuela because of the work of Bill Cashion, FMB Special Needs Coordinator, and other missionaries stationed in the country.

Now through the efforts of Mississippi Partnership Missions and the International Sports Federation, the Baptists of Venezuela are prepared to begin a sports ministry effort of their own that can help them to reach their country for Christ.

For more information, contact Bill Hardy, director of the

Partnership Missions Office at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, at P. O. Box 530, Jackson,

MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



A team of Venezuelan volleyballers compete at a national conference of Baptist youth and youth leaders while Venezuelan Baptist Convention president Hipolito Avilah looks on. Mississippi Baptists currently sponsor a partnership with Venezuelan Baptists. (Photo courtesy of Courtney Cash.)

Clarke College alumni dedicate center at homecoming

By Juanita West

Clarke College alumni and friends gathered during their annual homecoming on Aug. 3 to dedicate the Clarke College Alumni Center.

The center will house various materials related to Clarke College history and to the service made through the years by the institution and its alumni.

The house, located on the edge of the former Clarke College property in Newton, is being leased by the Mississippi Baptist Convention

Board for \$1 per year to the alumni association as long as an active association exists.

After the dedicatory prayer, the alumni toured the facility, which had been refurbished by the recently elected members of the alumni board.

Prior to the dedication, alumni and friends gathered at Calvary Church, Newton, for a morning of reunion and renewal.

After a fellowship continental breakfast, the group moved into the

church sanctuary for a period of spiritual fellowship.

James B. (Buddy) McElroy, former music faculty member and now minister of music at Liberty Church, Amite Association, led the congregational praise and the special music from the alumni choir.

The choir sang selections from McElroy's recently published "An Old-fashioned Homecoming," which he had written and performed with the Clarke College Choir in 1966.

Hal Bates ('71), pastor of Collinsville Church, Lauderdale Association, challenged the group to recognize how God is always at work in their lives and to commit themselves to his use.

J. B. Costilow ('51) Baptist Student Union director for 33 years, led a memorial service and a time of reminiscing about experiences at Clarke, especially memories related to those who have gained their final victory.

Two important items of business related to forming an alumni choir and establishing a Lottie Moon program.

McElroy is serving as coordinator of the reunion singers. According to McElroy, "We (Clarke) have alumni who sing living all over the United States and in many foreign countries. We also have trained musicians living all over who could direct these singers. Our goal is to minister by request through music and drama to any

church or mission station and also to provide fellowship among (Clarke's) alumni and friends.

Additional information will be sent to alumni who are interested in either singing or hosting a singing group.

Contact the Clarke College Alumni Association, P. O. Box 493, Newton, MS 390345, or call Marian Thornton at (601) 635-2911.

Costilow will coordinate a Clarke College Alumni Foreign Mission Emphasis. During the business meeting, the alumni voted to set a goal of \$650 for the Lottie Moon offering, to be given over and above the offering given through members' churches.

A special mission emphasis program, which will include the traditional lighting of the star, will be held at the Alumni Center in Newton on Saturday, Dec. 7, at 5 p.m.

Additional information can be obtained at the alumni breakfast at the Mississippi Baptist Convention on Wednesday morning, Oct. 30, or by writing the alumni office.

New officers elected to serve the association are James Griffith ('47), president; Cecile Reeves Stanback ('82), vice-president; Evelyn Carpenter Williams ('66), secretary/treasurer; and Kelton Valentine, faculty/staff advisor.

Homecoming '97 will be held in Newton on Saturday, April 26.

West is immediate past president of the Clarke College Alumni Association.

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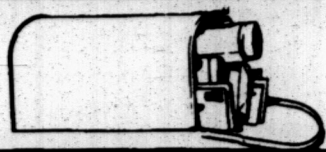
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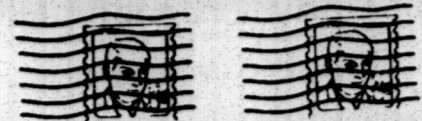
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Letters to the editor



County Line is 150

Editor:

In 1846, the citizens of Dossville met and organized a church that became County Line Church.

The membership of County Line Church met on Sept. 15, 1996, to celebrate the 150 years.

Bobby Waggoner, director of missions for Attala Association, presented a plaque and letter from the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission to Dwayne Dorsey, chairman of the deacons.

Former member James Smith attended and, along with his daughter, sang several songs to the congregation.

A history of the church was given by Scott Cockroft and a history of Mississippi, Leake County, and the local area during 1846 was read by Troy Sanders.

Former pastors Ricky Sherman, Leon Stewart, and Dwayne Tullos spoke to the congregation for a few minutes each.

H. C. Adams delivered the main morning sermon. Paul Williamson finished the morning with prayer and the blessing of the meal.

The Five Guys from First Church of Kosciusko sang four songs in the afternoon, with the Remus Church choir following.

Levon Moore, former director

of missions for Attala Association and former interim pastor, gave the evening message.

Williamson finished the day with a closing prayer.

When planning for this day, the church wanted to leave something for the next generation.

As a result, we came up with a large granite sign for the front of the church.

When plans for the sign were detailed to the church membership, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cockroft asked if they could pay for the sign and give it in memory of their son, Tony Cockroft, a member who died of cancer two years ago at the age of 36.

The sign was up for our special day.

Betty Sanders
County Line Church
Dossville

Gambling advice

Editor:

Thank you for the article quoting Joe Truill concerning the Bible's teaching on gambling, and your own editorial "You're the Bullseye" in "The Baptist Record" of Sept. 12.

Since casinos opened on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 1992 my wife and I have ministered to casino employees and those affected by

gambling here on the Coast.

A great deal of our work now is with our own Southern Baptist church members who have gotten caught up in gambling and found it impossible to quit without outside help.

A local certified gambling addiction counselor has told us that gambling addiction is very much like crack cocaine—almost impossible to overcome.

Much of our time is spent ministering to Christians who had never been in a casino before casinos came to our area.

What began as seemingly innocent recreation has brought devastation almost beyond description: lost jobs, lost homes, lost families, and lost lives.

Needless to say, church families have also suffered the process. To be sure, not everyone who gambles ends up addicted, but we have never met anyone with a gambling problem who expected gambling to totally take over their lives. The only sure way not to have a problem with gambling is to never gamble at all.

Our advice: If you haven't gam-

bled, don't start. If you are gambling, even a little, quit now. We have seen people who have gambled for months or even years with no apparent problems.

Then, all of a sudden, without warning, it is controlling them and it's no longer "recreational."

As gambling expands across our country, so does the associated fallout in terms of broken lives.

Please continue to keep the truth before our people.

John Landrum
Chaplain to the Miss. Beach
Gulfport

Homecomings

Calvary, Bruce: Oct. 13; 10:30 a.m., Wayne Gullett, guest speaker; lunch at noon; Ed Pettit will bring the homecoming message at 1:30 p.m.; Carl Morris, pastor.

Harrisville (Simpson): Oct. 13; 10 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, 11:45 a.m.; Dennis Allen, Bogalusa, La., guest speaker; Steve Coleman, Petal, singer; Donnie South, pastor.

Holly Springs (Marion): Oct. 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, 12:30 p.m.; 1:30 p.m., singers from BSU PRC, guest singers; Ben Purvis, Louisiana, guest speaker;

William Earl James, pastor.

Damascus (Metro): Oct. 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; meal served; William Bradshaw, pastor, speaker.

North Calvary, Philadelphia: Oct. 13; 11 a.m.; noon meal; singing in afternoon featuring Bob Peebles of Georgia; Chris Aldridge, pastor, speaker.

Mt. Pleasant, Sylva: Oct. 13; 11 a.m.; noon meal; afternoon singing and testimony time at 1:45 p.m.; Carey E. Bass, pastor, speaker.

New Hope, Monticello: Oct. 13; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, 12:30 p.m.; 1:15 p.m. singing; Robert Paul, Elba, Ala., guest speaker; David Williams, pastor.

Louin, Louin: Oct. 13; 90th anniversary; 10:45 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Howard Davis, guest speaker; revival services

will be held Oct. 13-16; 7 p.m.; Tommy Tanner, evangelist; Billy Burt, pastor.

Siloam, West Point: Oct. 13; 11 a.m.; noon meal; James Haggard, Conway, Ark., guest speaker; Rell Webber, Jackson, guest singer; David B. Bishop, pastor.

New Goodhope, Pulaski: Oct. 13; 10:30 a.m.; lunch served; 1:30 p.m. singing; Annie Lou Puckett will be honored; Paul Smith, speaker.

Mt. Vernon, West: Oct. 20; 10 a.m.; dinner on grounds; afternoon singing following lunch; Ray Bridges, guest speaker; Barry and Linda Thompson, Kosciusko, music; H. C. Adams, pastor.

Glendale, Leland: Oct. 27; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; 1:15 p.m. singing; Voices of Praise, Leland and Greenville, guest singers; Keith Dendy, pastor, speaker;

Missionary News

Kenneth and Ruth Bailey, missionaries, are on the field (address: Apartado Aereo 6229, Cali, Colombia). He is a native of Vardaman, and she is the former Ruth Holder of Houston.

David and Melissa Chism, missionaries to Mexico are on the field (address: Apartado 20, Bulevares, Edo. de Mexico 53140, Mexico). He was born in Tupelo, and considers Sheffield, Ala., his hometown. She is the former Melissa Swain of Lake Charles, La.

Henry and Linda Lee, missionaries to Japan, are on the field (address: 52-31 Matsumidai, Ikoma-shi 630-02, Japan). He is a native of Clarksdale. The former Linda Jackson was born in New Orleans, La., and considers Hazlehurst, her hometown.

Danny and Libby Panter, Baptist representatives in Europe,

are in the States (address: 80 Shores Dr., Clinton, Miss. 39056). He serves as associate to area director for Europe. He is a native of Pascagoula, and she is the former Libby Wallace of Jackson.

Errol and Mary Simmons, Baptist representatives in Hungary, are in the States (address: 3503 Lenfington Rd., Pensacola, Fla. 32504). A native of Louisiana, he

was born in Baton Rouge and grew up in Franklinton. The former Mary Ishee of Mississippi was born in Jones County and grew up near Laurel.

Linda Smith, missionary to Hong Kong, is on the field (address: Mongkok City Centre, 5th F, 74-84 Sai Yeung Choi St., S, Mongkok, Kowloon, Hong Kong). She is a native of Jackson.

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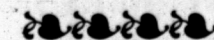
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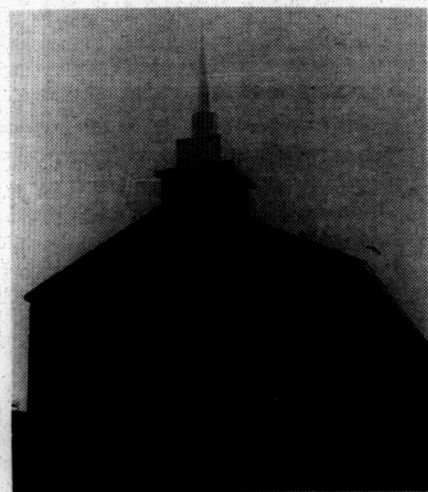
Ken Anderson, Pastor

Church Office: 924-9912

Just for the Record

Lone Pine Church, Canton, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Oct. 20 at 10:50 a.m. A time of fellowship and refreshments in fellowship hall will be held from 9:45 to 10:35 a.m. John Atchley is pastor.

Star Church, Star, dedicated its new building on Aug. 11 with approximately 700 people present for the 90th homecoming celebration that morning and dedication worship service in the afternoon. Star Church lost its former building by fire on Feb. 13, 1994. During the interim, the church met at Rankin Academy (recently dissolved), and the church purchased the facilities which are adjacent to the site of the new worship center. Victor Bowman is pastor.



Star Church, Star

Revival Dates

Shiloh, Oxford: Oct. 13-16; 11 a.m., lunch, and 7 p.m. daily; Jessie Foster, Dubach, La., evangelist; Huel Mosely, Memphis, Tenn., music; Ronnie Mayes, interim pastor.

Doty Chapel, Shannon: Oct. 13-16; 7 p.m.; Floyd Lamb, Walnut, evangelist; Micah Carter, music; Shawn Kinsey, pastor

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Poplar Church, Conehatta, will observe its 100th anniversary on Oct. 27. Services will begin at 10 a.m. The guest speaker will be Charles Melton of Newton. Other activities will include church history and 1:30 p.m. singing by The Revelations. Curtis Price is pastor.

Mt. Moriah Church, Lincoln County, will be observing its annual "Old Fashioned Day" Celebration on Oct. 13. Activities include Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., featuring Mike Grenn, pastor of Crooked Creek Church; dinner in fellowship hall; and 2:20 p.m. service with a mini-concert by Marilyn Phillips, followed by a message by David Williams, pastor of New Hope Church, Monticello.

Union Church, Puckett, will celebrate its 130th anniversary on Oct. 20. Former pastors are requested to notify the church at (601) 825-4871 or 825-5775.

Names in the News

Christi McCubbins of Jackson, a senior history major at Mississippi College, is the recipient of the UPS Foundation Scholarship awarded by Mississippi College through the Mississippi Foundation of Independent Colleges, Inc., which annually recommends deserving students to be named "UPS Scholar."

The Mississippi Council on Compulsive Gambling is hosting a conference for the clergy in Mississippi on Nov. 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Edison Walthall Hotel in downtown Jackson. Registration is \$15 which includes lunch and conference materials. For more information about the conference, call the council at (601) 353-4010.

The Mississippi College Communication Dept. has been selected as recipient of a grant from the Mississippi Press Association. Sidney Smith, journalism instructor, applied for the grant this past March for the purchase of a graphics computer. The Communication Department plans to use the new computer, a 9500 Power Mac along with an 8500 Mac and scanner to create a mini-graphics lab where students can learn Quark, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Illustrator.



Lawrence Millard Moak (left) was licensed to the ministry at Montgomery Church, Summit. Pictured with Moak is W. R. "Bill" Miller, pastor.

'CrossView' to air on FamilyNet, ACTS

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The weekly television program "CrossView" began airing in October on both FamilyNet and ACTS, the broadcast and cable television services of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

The program, hosted by Terry Rush and produced by Newcomer-Young Productions for World Radio Gospel Broadcasts of Monroe, La., is carried by FamilyNet on Sundays at 7:30 p.m. Eastern. It is carried by ACTS on the Odyssey Channel on Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. Eastern.

Darrell Frazier, executive director of World Radio, said "CrossView" was created with two audiences in mind: Christians who are weary and need encouragement and skeptics who are beginning to consider that

God may, in fact, be true and real.

"Our land is in desperate need of healing," said Frazier, "the kind that only comes from God. CrossView offers solace without a sermon, a gentle reminder of God's love through the voices of people who have overcome adversity."

Frazier said host Rush is most qualified to speak about pain and ultimate victory through his own personal experiences.

"When his daughter's fiance and his brother were brutally murdered by unknown assailants, Terry's world was shaken to the very core," Frazier said. "His struggle to survive this ordeal and the lessons he learned through it will give you strength, comfort and hope."

Staff Changes

Macedonia Church, Petal, has called **Billy Ray Nelson** as minister of music and youth, effective Sept. 15. Steve Coleman now serves as minister of music and education, his position becomes minister of education and administration. Nelson, a student at New Orleans Seminary, previously served as minister of music, youth, and children at Derma Church, Derma.



Nelson

Glendale Church, Leland has called **Robert Stokes** as minister of youth and children effective Sept. 22. A native of Greenville, Stokes is a 1995



Stokes

graduate of the University of Mississippi.

Bethlehem church of Yazoo Association has called **S. M. "Rocky" Henriques, Jr.** as pastor effective Oct. 1. Henriques previously served as pastor of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, and Clarksdale Church, North Delta association. His wife, Mary Ann Henriques, is an instructor at Mississippi College (MC). They have one daughter, a freshman at MC and a son in high school. Henriques, a native of Jackson, is a graduate of New Orleans seminary with the master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees.

Scott Wilson and Tim Moak have joined the staff of First Church Flora. Effective Sept. 8, Wilson has

been serving as minister of youth. He is a student at Mississippi College (MC). Moak began service as minister of music on Oct. 6. A graduate of MC with a masters degree in music, Moak previously served First Church Byram.

Iuka Church, Iuka, has called **Jim Manley** as pastor, effective July 7. A native of Jackson, Tenn., his previous place of service was Cason Church, Nettleton.



Manley

Bill Hardin is the new pastor of First Church, Picayune effective August 18.

Hardin is a graduate of the University of Mississippi, has the master of divinity degree from New Orleans seminary and the doctor of ministry degree from Southern Seminary. He previously served as pastor of First Church Ripley. He is a member of "The Baptist Record" advisory committee.



Hardin

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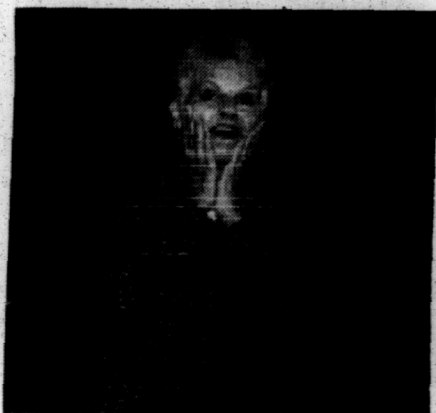
College Student Conference attracts record crowd

by Carl M. White

"What would happen in the world," Esther Burroughs asked over a thousand students gather at First Church, Jackson, "if this generation of college students would go out of their way while on their way to splash the living water?"

Making reference to the woman at the well story of John 4, Burroughs pointed out that Jesus offers to us the living water. "We can have it," Burroughs said, "and we can splash it on others."

Burroughs is the Assistant Director, field staff, for the church growth and associational evangelism department of the Home Mission Board. She was the featured speaker at the annual College Student Conference held September 27-28.



Esther Burroughs of the Home Mission Board challenges students to share the gospel with those they come in contact with at home and on their campus.

By splashing, Burroughs meant sharing a witness for Christ. She urged the students to discover the real simplicity of bearing a witness. "It is all about relationships," she said. "We have made it too hard."

"Much about witnessing is simple common courtesy," Burroughs added.

"You can use a witnessing tract,

you can use the inspired Word of God, but if you take the time to build a relationship you can 'splash' some of the living water on others," Burroughs explained.

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem when, while on his way he went out of his way to get water from a well in Samaria, Burroughs pointed out.

There he met a woman. "It was a divine appointment," Burroughs said. She added that we all have divine appointments with people if we will just take the time to go a little bit out of our way while we are on the way.

This year's conference was built around the theme "Into Their Shoes," meaning getting involved in the lives of lost persons.

The 1000-plus in attendance was the largest crowd in many years, according to Weaver McCracken, Associate Director of Student Work for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The annual meeting serves as a state-wide kick off for the state Baptist Student Union (BSU) missions program.

"It also serves as a supplement for the local campus ministry," McCracken said.

Many BSUs have already had welcome programs, survival weekends and fall retreats, McCracken added.

"The state conference helps give the student the big picture, that BSU is more than just one campus," he said.



Curt Cloninger, dramatist from Atlanta, GA, plays the role of a street-wise man who was at the "second to the last supper" with Jesus, along with other people who "used to be something else before they met Jesus."

On Saturday of the conference, a business session was held and a \$151,872 budget for the student mission program was approved.

This budget will fund the 50th year of student summer missions in Mississippi, McCracken pointed out.

"From 1947 to 1996, Mississippi BSU sent 1,764 students on summer missions and raised 1.7 million dollars," he said.

Also, in 1997 Southern Baptists will celebrate 75 years of student work on college campuses.

Mississippi Baptists have been on the forefront of student work in the Southern Baptist Convention.

As early as 1919 Texas and Mississippi Baptists passed resolutions in favor of starting work in college campuses, McCracken pointed out.

"Burroughs wanted to know how we could reach so many students at a state meeting when other states are seeing a decline," McCracken said.

"I told her it was because we have such great local directors who are committed to reaching students," he added.

"They are getting the job done on the local level," he said.

Leading music for the worship time was Chuck Bentley, a musician from Nashville, Tenn.

Curt Cloninger, a dramatist



Over 1000 college students from campuses across the state fill First Church, Jackson's Fellowship Hall East on Friday night of the 1996 College Student Conference.

from Atlanta Ga., presented several creative sketches of people who might have known Jesus.

BSU is the mission outreach arm of Mississippi Baptist churches. "We supplement the work of the local church on campus," McCracken said. "We are not a

church, we are partners with local churches," he added.

Each BSU has a local advisory committee and receives money from local churches to support their work. Mississippi Baptists have student work on 31 college campus in the state.



Enjoying fellowship at the College Student Conference are (from the left), Gwen Dean, Dan Rawlinson, Allen Lee, Lee Smith, all from Delta State University, and Randy Roark from the University of Southern Mississippi. (Photos by Carl M. White)

First person...

BSU conference worship is electric

By Carl M. White

Over one thousand students, of all colors, all sizes, with an enthusiasm that only college students can have, are clapping hands and filling the air with songs of praise. "Oh Lord, we praise your name..." they sing.

I see students from every corner of the state, and almost every campus. They have come to Jackson to learn, worship and be challenged. I have come to observe, as a dispassionate journalist from the denominational newsjournal.

There is an electricity in the air. These young adults are worshipping and praising God with music and a beat that is the mark of their generation.

Smiles and laughter fill the air. There are shouts of praise and the clapping of hands. One group of students leave their seats and come stand down front. Another group lock hands as they sing. Still others sway back and forth to the unceasing beat of the music while they sing "He is exalted the King is exalted on high."

Then, at the appropriate moment, the noise surrenders to the quiet reflection of prayer and meditation. Softly, their voices proclaim, "such joy, such unspeakable joy."

The words are projected on a huge screen suspended above a solitary young man and a guitar spot lit on a stage. There is no organ nor piano, no hymn books of traditional hymns. But without a doubt, the fellowship hall of First Church, Jackson, is filled with worshippers, expressing praise and adoration for our

Lord Jesus Christ. These students are worshipping God with passion and unbridled enthusiasm. I cannot be a dispassionate observer. I put my camera down and raise my voice to worship with them. God is in this place.

"Such peace, such joy, such love... Spirit have your way with me," we sing.

"I was born to know you, I was born to praise you," we sing as an affirmation, a statement of faith that this gathering is somehow, in the mystery of God's holiness, an appointment He has made for us.

These young men and women — our college students, from our Sunday schools, youth ministries, Acteen and RA programs — they are tomorrow's deacons, Sunday school teachers, pastors, missionaries and leaders. They are the future of Baptists in Mississippi.

"I love you Lord, and I lift my voice." Their voices, unaccompanied, fill the room with a smooth, soft harmony. A warm blanket of praise settles on the congregation of worshippers. The Lord is here. Lives are being touched.

When I left First Church last Friday night my heart was filled with the blessed experience of worship. The BSU ministry of this state is vast and far reaching. God is at work in the generation of men and women some call Generation X. Perhaps that will one day come to mean a generation that belongs to Christ.

Lord, may it be so. God bless the work of the BSU.

Baptist Work on Campus

Campuses with student work	31
Campuses with student centers	19
Campus staff	
full-time directors	21
full-time associates	4
part-time directors	2
part-time associates/assistant directors	5
volunteer directors	5
interns	5
Students involved in campus programs	5,607
Students touched by campus activities	11,561
Students saved	226
Students preparing for church vocations	662
Student summer missionaries	80, 17 colleges
Foreign field - 15	Home field - 65
Student mission gifts as of 9/27/96	\$105,692.76
Students in short-term mission projects	288
Students on staff at G. A. camp	34
Students on staff at R. A. camp	23
Students on staff at Gulfshore	51

2,059 students involved in Bible study groups
1,067 students involved in discipleship groups
867 students involved in community missions
68 students involved in outreach projects

Family Bible Series

formerly Convention Uniform Series



Rejecting false promises

By Jim Phillips
Jeremiah 28: 5-14

There are generally two sides to every story. Both can be true factually but not necessarily right. Both sides can sound good but that again doesn't necessarily make them true. Either can sound, look, and seem good and then be dead wrong! During this fast approaching election season, we're all faced with trying to discern what we believe to be true and factual and well, right. Even when presented with all the facts, the person who delivers the information and tries to convince the general public of its validity must then be held responsible for the outcome.

Jeremiah was a prophet with credentials. His integrity before God and the people could be traced to how God had used him and how the people had believed in him. His place and timing in Israel's history placed him smack dab in the middle of some turbulent days. Isaiah had predicted that Judah would eventually face judgement and Jeremiah had the distinct privilege of declaring that judgement was now imminent. To illustrate their pending captivity, Jeremiah wore a wooden yoke around his neck to visually show their eventual hardship. The yoke was representative of Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon who would come in and burden the people by carrying them away to Babylon (27:1-7). The period of captivity was to last fifty years.

Needless to say, Jeremiah was not overly favored among the people as he paraded about demonstrating how their sins were about to be judged. On to the scene came Hananiah, a false prophet. His message was the complete opposite from Jeremiah's. He was predicting that in two years God would cause Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to fall and then Judah would be restored. Though it would have been a popular thing to say, nothing could have been farther from the truth.

It's interesting to note that though Jeremiah knew in his heart that Hananiah was lying, he didn't lash out at him but rather allowed for God to move in and eventually take him off the scene (vv. 5-9). He could have brazenly declared him to be lying through his teeth to gain the popularity of the people, but instead he made the choice of challenging the people to watch for whose declarations would prove true (v.9). Hananiah actually snatched the yoke off Jeremiah's neck and shattered it to add to his colorful prediction. In its place God had Jeremiah place an iron yoke around his neck to further indicate the certainty of the coming exile.

The time should come in Christian maturity when we seek the face of God whenever our country or our family's future is at stake. Whenever we may be told of how good or how bad things really are, it is our God honored responsibility to check that matter against the truth of God. If we individually, or our family or nation as a whole, stand to be judged because of sin, listening to a voice of falsehood won't change God's eventual hand of judgement. No amount of rhetoric will change God's Word or truth, and that is the Voice we should be desirous to hear.

Much of our nation and many of our families are setting themselves up for eventual judgement. Listening to the wrong voices can further the decline and hasten the judgement. We must collectively reject any person who claims he or she sees a different picture for our future if the Word of God declares that we're off course and self-destructing. God can, if he chooses, use any and every means to prove his point that he alone is the Voice that his people are to obey. We're not to stand around and be suckered into any political philosophy that doesn't take into account the expectations of God. These are crucial days in our land just as they were for Jeremiah. We too need truth. Not questionable truth for the sake of votes, but God wrought truth for the sake of survival. As you and I listen to the promises and assurances of those before us in these days, may we always be certain that we seek to know what God says first, only then can we possibly do that which will please him. Words do have consequences. Let us make sure that we distinguish between what is really true and what is obviously false. Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing!

Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

Explore the Bible

formerly the Bible Book Series



A call to repent

By Ronald Bishop
Matthew 3-4

John the Baptist was one of the most important figures in the New Testament, for he prepared the way for the Messiah. John was a cousin of Jesus and was six months older. About the age of thirty, John launched his preaching ministry. John's mission was to announce that the Messiah had come.

John preached in the wilderness of Judea that people should repent of their sins. Repentance means "to turn," as in to turn around and head in a new direction. Both the Hebrew word and the Greek word translated "repentance" carry this significance. Repentance means more than a public display or a half-hearted attempt. Repentance means to change one's direction in life and to turn consciously from sin. Matthew saw in the ministry of John the fulfillment of a verse in Isaiah forty, referring to one announcing in the wilderness the coming of the Lord. There, God was delivering his people from fifty years of exile in Babylon. For John, God was delivering his people from a lifetime of bondage to sin.

Matthew described John as an austere man, not accustomed to life's luxuries. He dressed simply in clothing made of camel hair and leather. He lived the life of an ascetic, eating locusts and wild honey. Luke 1:80 suggests that John lived in the wilderness most of his life until he began his public ministry. Some scholars suggest that John was acquainted with the community at Qumran that produced the Dead Sea Scrolls and may have even spent some time with them.

John preached his message of repentance in Jerusalem and its environs, as well as all along the Jordan River, his favorite location for baptizing. People turned out to hear his preaching and to be baptized. John challenged many of those who came to him, urging them to repent truly before they submitted to baptism. He knew that some members in his audience were not sincere. Many had been accustomed to various ritual washings that were a part of their everyday lives. John wanted his hearers to know that repentance was something much more serious than ritual.

John told his followers that he baptized those who would repent, but he was only preparing them for the coming of one who was greater than himself. Jesus would come, bringing the Holy Spirit. Sure enough, Jesus came from Galilee, desiring to be baptized by John. Though John initially resisted, he consented and baptized Jesus, inaugurating his Messianic ministry. One may wonder, "Why did Jesus desire to be baptized?" He had no sins of which to repent. He had done no wrong. He did not need to join any church. What did he mean when he told John that his being baptized would "fulfill all righteousness?"

Perhaps Jesus meant to make an example for others to follow. After all, if Jesus submitted to baptism, his followers should as well. Perhaps Jesus wanted to give public validation to the ministry of John, to show that he was in fact preparing the way for the Messiah. Whatever the reason, Jesus considered baptism to be so important that he went through with it.

After his baptism, Jesus would be tempted and would successfully withstand the temptation. He set an example for others who would repent of their sins only to be faced with subsequent temptations. Jesus demonstrated that temptations can be overcome. To please God, one must repent and be diligent in avoiding sin.

Repentance is the first step to a relationship with God. Each individual must repent. No one can repent for another. God has given each person the awesome responsibility of being accountable for his or her own actions. What have you done about it?

Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College.

Life and Work

There's only one



By Cynthia Douglas
Ex. 20; Ps. 100; Jer. 2; Luke 10

The Ten Commandments were the foundation for the covenant between God and Israel. Four of the commandments speak to Israel's relationship with God; six commandments relate to their relationships with one another. In Matt. 5:17, Jesus said he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it. Because of grace, believers gladly obey God's Word. The one and only God (Ex. 20:1-3) In verse 2 God declared he alone was God and he was the one who delivered them out of bondage. God was saying, "This is who I am and what I have done for you." Deut. 6:4 says: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one." This commitment to one God compels an obedience to his teachings. Verse 3 says: "You shall have no other gods before me." The Hebrews had left Egypt where the people worshiped many gods. They were on their way to Canaan where the people also worshipped numbers of gods. The Hebrews faced the temptation to have many gods but God's words were clear — no other gods! God calls people to an undivided allegiance and a total commitment.

Martin Luther said, "Whatever thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy God." Is God your first commitment or is position, job, or family claiming the first allegiance of your heart? Jesus said in Matt. 6:33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." God alone is worthy of our praise and adoration.

Worship God (Ps. 100:1-5). Psalm 100, a beautiful song of praise and thanksgiving, reminds us that the Lord is God. Verses 1 and 2 describe how to worship God - with gladness and joy! Believers not only worship God with joy, we worship him because he alone is our Creator and shepherd as described in verse 3. God is the Lord of creation, he made us in his own image, and he shepherds his people. Thanksgiving and praise are described in verse 4 as a vital part of the worship of God. God is faithful and his love endures forever. God is the one and only true God who is to be loved and worshipped above everything else.

Never forsake God (Jeremiah 2:11-13). Jeremiah was giving a prophetic message to the people of Judah. They believed they could worship the idols and the gods of the neighboring lands. Only a few people remained completely faithful to God and Jeremiah was one of them.

In verses 11 and 12, the Lord declared it was a great horror that the people had exchanged their worship of God for a worship of worthless idols. God said the people had forsaken him. This sad account of Judah's turning away from God serves as a warning to our generation. God still desires to be the God of his people. What distraction do you face which keeps you from serving God first?

Love God above everything else (Luke 10:25-28). When the Jewish scribe asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus replied with a question: "What is written in the law?" The scribe, in his response, gave the sum of the Ten Commandments - to love God with the totality of your being.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God has shown his people how he alone is the one true God. Whenever people turn to idols and stop worshiping God as the one God, they always suffer. Because of his creation of the world, his provision for our sin debt, his great love, and desire for intimate fellowship, God alone is worthy to be worshipped.

Believers today need to practice loving God above everything else. The world swamps individuals with demands for time and energy. Do you worship God as the one God? Do you worship and love him above everything else? Is it your intention to make God the center of your life?

Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.

capsules

FRAN RELIEF SHIFTS TO CLEANUP, BAPTIST MEAL TOTAL TOPS 500,000: MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist relief efforts in eastern North Carolina have moved into a new phase with the departure of all but one feeding unit from the hurricane-stricken area. More than 500,000 meals had been provided by Southern Baptist volunteers as of Sept. 24. Potential volunteers are asked to contact North Carolina Baptist Men before arriving in the area at 1-800-395-5102 or (919) 467-5100, extensions 335 or 333. The North Carolina cities of Jacksonville, Kinston, and Wilmington are expected to be centers of cleanup and "mud-out" activity. More than 1,000 cleanup jobs already have been completed.

SBC, ROMAN CATHOLIC TEAMS DISCUSS BIBLICAL AUTHORITY: WASHINGTON (BP) — A team of eight Southern Baptists met with a team of eight Roman Catholics to discuss the inerrancy of Scripture, Sept. 12-14 in Washington. This was the second meeting of the recently reconstituted Southern Baptist Convention-National Conference of Catholic Bishops Conversation. The annual meetings are aimed at clearing away misunderstandings the two groups may have of one another. A report on the Scripture discussion is to be published next year.

CARTER, MOYERS NAMED RECIPIENTS OF BJC RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AWARD: WASHINGTON (ABP) — Former President Jimmy Carter and journalist Bill Moyers have been named 1996 recipients of the Baptist Joint Committee's J.M. Dawson Religious Liberty Award. The Dawson award is presented periodically by the Washington, D.C.-based religious liberty agency and is named for the first executive director of the 60-year-old agency. It recognizes contributions of individuals in advancing religious liberty, defending separation of church and state and applying Christian commitment in public life.

ANNUITY BOARD: NO '97 HIKE IN MEDICAL OVERAGE RATES: DALLAS (BP) — There will be no Jan. 1, 1997, rate increase for the Personal Security Program (PSP) Comprehensive Medical Plan offered by the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to individual participants employed by Southern Baptist churches and associations. Joel H. Mathis, senior vice president for insurance services, noted monthly rates for the Personal Security Program medical plan have been increased only one time since July 1992.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Should I walk the aisle and rededicate my life on a regular basis in order to stay "pumped up" about being a Christian?

Rededicating your life is a public expression of your personal commitment to Christ, but it is not meant to be the sole, recurrent means to staying "pumped up" about Jesus. To expand on your athletic metaphor, a weight lifter stays "pumped up" because he maintains a disciplined, regular workout schedule. You can do the same as a Christian by maintaining a "workout schedule" of prayer, Bible study, Christian fellowship, church attendance, Christian music, etc. Walking the aisle should be reserved for a true movement of the Holy Spirit; when that expression becomes too common in your spiritual life, you will search for something as exciting to take its place. Also, be sure to vary your spiritual workout so that all your "muscle groups" become stronger. You'll need all your strength to stand tall and be courageous in your walk with the Lord.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

I heard that a child in my preschooler's Sunday School has AIDS. Should I confront the preschool minister or just pull my child out of church?

Discuss this situation with your preschool minister. Every church should have an infectious disease policy in place. (If not, have your preschool minister contact Linda Reeves in the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. She can help your church set up a policy.) You should have all the facts before you pull your child out of something as crucial as Sunday School to his/her early spiritual development. You should pray for God's guidance in this situation. The AIDS child is still a child of God, and much in need of Christian love and care. That doesn't mean that you should abandon every possible course of safety for your child, but it does mean that your response should serve as a Christian example to the affected child and his/her loved ones.

CBF to move Atlanta offices; begin second annual offering

ATLANTA (ABP) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) will move into new offices in December and will sponsor a second annual offering, in addition to the group's global missions offering, for theological education. The Fellowship's Coordinating Council approved those items and elected two major staff members at a Sept. 26-28 meeting in Atlanta.

Interim coordinator Tommy Boland reported that new CBF offices in Atlanta will be completed in December. The staff plans to move to the new quarters the week-end of Dec. 13-15. The council approved a total of \$175,000 to finance the move.

Last fall the Fellowship entered into a lease-purchase agreement with Mercer University to occupy space in the building Mercer is building for its new school of theology.

The Fellowship gave Mercer \$750,000 for a five-year lease on office space and purchased a \$1.75 million piece of property adjacent to Mercer's Atlanta campus. The purchase from invested funds was to help Mercer raise money to complete the building. In the future, the Fellowship could sell the property or build a permanent headquarters on it, leaders said last year.

The proposal to receive a special offering for theological education was presented on behalf of the Baptist principles work group by Kittie Johnson of Richmond, Va., and Joy Steincross of Liberty, Mo. The offering will be promoted each May and will be evaluated after five years. The CBF global missions

offering is promoted in December.

A committee studying the thorny question of denominational endorsement for chaplains reported it may be able to find a way for the Fellowship to endorse chaplains without declaring itself to be a "convention" or "denomination."

Some agencies which require endorsement allow a "faith group" to qualify for endorsement by analyzing the number of persons involved in such groups, the number of churches offering allegiance and the

number of churches dually aligned with other religious groups which endorse chaplains, the committee reported. The study committee, chaired by Ed Beddingfield of Sylva, N.C., will report again in January.

The Coordinating Council voted to schedule the 1998 General Assembly for June 25-27 in Houston. The 1999 assembly will convene June 24-26 in Birmingham, Ala. Next year's general assembly is June 26-28 in Louisville, Ky.

Jackson attorney joins ABP board of trustees

ARLINGTON, Va. (ABP) — Showing continued signs of growth, directors of Associated Baptist Press (ABP) approved a record budget for 1997 and elected five new board members and a new slate of officers during a semiannual meeting Sept. 27-28 in Rosslyn, Va.

ABP, a 5-year-old independent news cooperative, also awarded its 1996 Religious Freedom Award to Gus Niebuhr, national religion correspondent at the "New York Times."

The ABP board, chaired for the past two years by Nashville, Tenn., attorney Jeff Mobley, approved a \$322,000 budget for 1997, a 9.5% increase over the previous year's spending plan.

The independent news cooperative's revenues have grown an average of 11% annually during

the last three years, according to Executive Editor Greg Warner.

Mike Clingenpeel, editor of Virginia's "Religious Herald," was elected new chair of the ABP board.

Other officers elected at the meeting are Judy Schmeltekopf of Waco, Texas, vice chair; Bob Stephenson of Norman, Okla., secretary; and Don McGregor, editor emeritus of "The Baptist Record," now of Mesquite, Texas, treasurer.

The five new board members elected are Beth Ann Boland, an Alpharetta, Ga., homemaker; Dan Lattimore, chairman of the journalism department at the University of Memphis; Philip Poole, assistant to the president at Southwest Baptist University at Bolivar, Mo.; Hal Wingo of Richmond, Va., a recently retired editor with "Time Inc."; and Rebecca Wiggs, a Jackson attorney.

Florida board to define cooperation

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — The Florida Baptist Convention's (FBC) state board of missions approved a ground-breaking document that defines a cooperating church and association by theological, declaration, financial, and statistical parameters during its Sept. 13 meeting at Lake Yale Baptist Assembly.

According to the document, all current Florida Baptist churches are entitled to all benefits and privileges of affiliation, including sending messengers to the annual meeting, eligibility of members to serve in elected

positions, services and benefits provided by state convention agencies and institutions, and inclusion in the Internal Revenue Services group tax exemption status.

According to the document, a newly organized association also must meet certain criteria in order to affiliate with the state convention.

A new association must have at least 15 constituted churches with a combined church membership of at least 14,000 members.

Other criteria include an application process, theological integri-

ty, a declaration and entering into a cooperative agreement with the Florida Baptist Convention.

Affiliation includes representation on the state board of missions, the convention's governing body between annual sessions of the state convention.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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HKJ REAHBCQESHN EQF OHEQFA PO EQF ZQBWJ
ZABFJ PDE, HKJ RHBJSBEQ EFHAR, WPAJ, B
GFWBFLF; QFWM EQPD UBKF DKGFWBFO
UHAX KBKF: ESFKEN-OPDA

Clue R equals S

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Six Forty-Four.

Baptist Record

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